1:Gordon E-4, 5 (no date) 1907 AR? Khasi AR?

lyngdoh to this *god*. As in the case of sacrifices to *Ka Iei Sing*, the services of a priestess are indispensable.

A *lyngdoh* is a *lyngdoh* for life. When a lyngdoh dies and his successor is appointed, certain rather elaborate ceremonies are observed in the Nongkrem *raj* of the Khyrim State. The funeral ceremonies of the old *lyngdoh* having been completed, the *lyngdoh* clan appoints his successor. The latter then, after performing his ablutions, proceeds, accompanied by the assembled members of the *lyngdoh* clan, to the top of the Shillong Peak. The lyngdoh and his clansmen advance along the road dancing, this dancing being carried on all the way from the *lyngdoh's* house to the Shillong Peak. All are clad in the distinctive Khasi dancing dress. Having reached the Peak, they pick the leaves of a tree called *ka ie phlank*, which they spread on the ground. A goat and a cock are then sacrificed, the new *lyngdoh* acting as the sacrificer. There are the usual ceremonies, including branches of the Khasi *saing* or oak. Nine portions (*dylliat*) are cut from different parts of the victims and are offered to the *god* of the Shillong Peak, *U bei Shillong*. The *lyngdoh* and his companions then perform obeisance three times to the god, and the lyngdoh walks backwards some paces. The puja is then over, and they return dancing to the lyngdoh's house. On another day the *lyngdoh* performs a puja to *u ka Lyngdoh*, also a *Shnoid*. Undoubtedly the most interesting feature of the ceremonies on these occasions is the dancing. This dancing is carried out by the *lyngdoh* and his companions armed with sword and shield, a flying mane of goat's hair (*synpliah*) being also sometimes held in one hand, a quiver of arrows being slung on the back, and a plume of black and white cock feathers (*u thrpe*) fixed on the turban. The dance is executed in a regular figure, the dancers advancing and retiring in an orderly and methodical manner, and finally clashing their swords together in mock combat. The dance of the present day is not unlikely the survival of a war dance of ancient times. The lyngdohs say they dance in honour of *U bei Lyngdoh*, to whom such dances are thought to be pleasing. The dance of the lyngdohs on these occasions may be compared with that of the Roman salii, who, in the month of March, performed a war dance in honour of Mars.

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a similar custom prevalent amongst the Khyrwangs. The Kyngtangs, in the Jaintia Hills, keep dead bodies sometimes as long as a month, until the *pleas* or ceremonial dance has been performed. Hence they are called *Kyngtang*, or "stinkers." Amongst the Kyngtangs the dead body is kept for sometimes three or four months, or up to the time when a bull can be procured for a feast to the villagers. This feast is an essential, and until being eaten in the Kyngtang country, there is often great delay in disposing of the body. Kyngtang villages at night are very still. The Kyngtangs of Nongkhlaw bury the relatives' bones of the deceased within the village, and in front of the house occupied by the deceased when alive, the bones being placed in a hole in the ground over which is laid a stone, a bamboo mat being rolled over the stone. A bamboo fence three or four feet high is erected round the grave. Other Kyngtangs bury the recalcined bones and ashes in a gourd in the jungle near the burning-place. On their way home, the members of the clan of the deceased who have come from other villages to witness the funeral obsequies, put up a stone on the path in honour of the deceased, a turban being tied round the top of the stone. The Siems or Rajas, who live at the foot of the hills in the Khasi States, and are called by the Assamese *Raja* (princes), erect memorial stones in honour of the deceased, the bones for burial of sacrificial animals and other articles being hung on the stones. The stones are also scattered in clefts, and turbans are tied round the tops. The death customs of the Kyngtangs, and indeed other customs also, are partly Khasi and partly Garo, it being difficult to say that the Kyngtangs are more Khasi than Garo, or more Garo than Khasi in this respect; their language, however, has been found by Dr. Stevenson to be a corruption of Khasi. In Nongstoin, Mawlih, and Mairang villages, the inhabitants of which profess to be Khasis, the bones and ashes of the deceased are not collected and placed in sepulchres, as at Cherrapunji. At Mairang and Nongstoin a large wooden coffin is used, painted white, with ornamentations on the outside, and standing on four legs. This coffin is not burnt on the funeral pyre. In the vicinity of the hills at Chuna, the body of a deceased Siem is disposed of in the following manner:—It is wrapped in a cloth

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the bones of males and females being kept in separate bundles wrapped in white cloth, two women of the clan reverently carrying them in their arms, holding the bundles of bones to their breasts. One female carries the bones of the males and the other those of the females. In front of these women walks an old man who scatters along the way leaves of the *diengkhit* tree and grains of rice, and when it is necessary to cross any stream or river, he ties a thread from one side of the bank to the other, this is for the spirit of the departed to cross the water. Sometimes u'mem *kdar-lâ*, a kind of long grass, is used instead of thread for the above purpose. On arrival at the clan puja-house, the bones of the males are laid on one bed and those of the females on another, the beds being bedecked with rich hangings. A cock, *u'kiar kradkpoti* (lit.: "the cock which scratches the way"), is sacrificed, this sacrifice being considered by the Khasis to be of peculiar significance. A pig, a cock, and a bull are then sacrificed, and portions of the above are offered to the spirits of the deceased. These offerings are known by the name of *ai-kam*, and are placed in a basket which is hung up in the house, together with the left thigh of the fowl and the lower jaw-bone of the bullock. A dance is performed that night, first in the house by two women, one belonging to the clan and the other an outsider, and afterwards in a specially prepared place outside the house called "*lyngngop*." The *shawati*, or flute, which is played at funerals is sounded, drums are beaten, and bombs are exploded. This dancing lasts from one to nine days, the limit being always an uneven number of days. At Cherra two effigies called *Ka Pieus* and *U Tyngskop* are prepared and dressed up: the former is intended to represent *Ka Iawbei*, the first ancestress, and the other *U Suidnia*, the first maternal uncle of the clan. These effigies are held in the hands of the dancers. In the meantime two lines of upright stones consisting of three each, with a table-stone in front of each line, have been set up. These are called *mawkjait* or *mawkpoti*, and are intended to serve as resting-places for the spirits of the dead on their way to the tomb of the clan. These stones are generally not more than three feet in height, and must not be confounded with the larger stones or *mawbynna*. On the night before it is proposed to deposit the

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close to the wall which is farthest away from the door, the bones of the males being deposited in a pot inside the tomb nearest the door. Some clans keep the pot containing the bones of the males on the right, and the vessel containing those of the females on the left hand. Then offerings of food and libations of liquor are offered to the ancestors on a stone in front of the tomb. The males then perform a ceremonial dance with swords and shields, three times, and the door of the sepulchre is closed, a flag being fixed to the tomb. All the clansfolk then depart except three men. One of these sacrifices a cock (*ior-tanding*) in front of the tomb, a second sits behind the sacrificer, holding three firebrands, and a third sits behind the tomb. The man with the firebrands shakes them about, and then crows like a cock three times. The man behind the tomb listens attentively for any fancied noise within it, the superstition being that if the ceremonies detailed above have not been properly performed, the whole tomb will quake. If the three watchers are satisfied that there is no commotion within the tomb, then all is well, and they return and report the result to the clanspeople. This ceremony is called *tanding*, or the fire test. Next morning the woman who is the head of the *iing-sang*, or puja-house, distributes to all those who have taken part in these sacrifices the hinder portions of the sacrificial animals. She then blesses one by one the assembled clansfolk. The latter are not permitted by custom to go to work until after three days from the time of the ceremony; the third day being called *ka sngi lait ia*. The ceremony described above is a symbolical one. The massive stone sepulchre is regarded as a symbol of a secure place of rest for the departed spirits. If the spirits of the dead are not, however, appeased by the due performance of the ceremonies attending the bestowal of the remains in the clan *cinerarium*, it is believed that they roam about and haunt their relations on earth, and plague them with various misfortunes. It may be interesting to note here, that Mr. Moberly, the Superintendent of Ethnography in Bengal, reports that the ashes of deceased Hos, after being sprinkled with water by means of peepul branches, are collected, dried, and placed in a new earthen pot, and kept in the house until the day of burial, which may take place, as with

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which a figure, evidently of a Hindu god, has been carved, without doubt after the erection of the stone. Here we have a striking parallel case to the painted and carved menhir near Tregastel in Brittany, upon which has been carved the representation of a crucifix. There are also some carved stones near Nartiang (said to represent two women) called *mawthaw-dor briew*.

The Khasis say that these great stones were brought sometimes from considerable distances. After being hewn, the stones were laid on a large, wooden trolley and dragged across country by means of ropes of cane, of which plenty can be had from the Wet country on the northern side of the district, and then placed in position by means of ropes and levers. It seems little short of marvellous that these stones, which sometimes weighed many tons, were placed in position by such primitive means, especially when we consider the great trouble there was to re-erect one of the fallen stones at Nongbareh lately. Nowadays only comparatively small stones are erected, which are generally hewn and erected on the spot, so that there is no necessity for any conveyance.

In conclusion, it may be remarked that the subject of the Khasi monoliths is in reality a large one, on which a great deal could be written, but owing to considerations of space it has been found necessary to compress the account within its present limits.

FESTIVITIES, DOMESTIC AND TRIBAL.

Dancing forms the principal part of all the Khasi festivities, and is an important adjunct of some of their religious ceremonies. One of the greatest festivals in the Khasi Hills is the Nongkrem dance; it may be said to be as important an event to the Khasis as the *Ilch diang-khlam* festivities are to the Syntengs.

The Nongkrem dance is really part of what is known as the *pomblang*, or goat-killing ceremony, performed by the Siem of Khyrim (or Nongkrem) with the aid of his *sah-blei* (high priest) and the various *lyngdohs* (or priests) to Ka Blei Synshar (the ruling goddess), that the crops may prosper and that there may

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to a successful era in store for the people of the State. The goddess on this occasion may be regarded as a Khasi Demeter, although no myst rise form part of her services as at the Grecian Eleusis. The Nongkrem ceremony and dance (now held at Smit) take place in the late spring, generally in the month of May. A lucky day having been fixed, the Siem sends a ring of cane (*lyrwah*) by way of a summons to the people of every village in the State, at the same time informing them of the date of the puja, and requesting them to attend with their offerings, consisting of goats and different articles of food. In the meantime various pujas have been taking place in the house of *Ka Siem Sad*, the Siem priestess, which it would be tedious to describe in detail. The more interesting points only will be mentioned. A fortnight before the puja and dance at Smit the *sob-khei*, or high priest, pours out libations of liquor in the *kyrem-khang*, or place where the sacrificial goats are kept, and in front of the great post (*ri diang ensing*, or Khasi oak), in the house of the Siem priestess. Dancing then takes place in front of the post. Later on the Siem, with the high priest and other attendant priests, walks with extremely slow gait to a small hill where a stone altar has been prepared, and sacrifices a cock in honour of *u'lei Shillong*, or the god of the Shillong Peak. A silver dish with powdered rice, liquor in a gourd (*ka'iad um*), betel-nut, and some leaves of the Khasi oak (*diang ensing*), are also necessary adjuncts of the puja. A goat is then sacrificed, and the sacrifice is followed by a dance of twenty-two men armed with swords and shields and clowries (*ky-dapo*). Having danced before the altar, the party returns to the house of the Siem priestess and executes another dance in the great courtyard. The Siem and certain selected persons dance in front of the *wishot khei*, or holy post of Khasi oak inside the house of the Siem priestess, the dancers being entertained with dried fish and ginger. Then follows the great dance of girls and men in front of her house. The girls dance in the centre, taking such tiny steps, that the lifting of their feet from the ground is hardly perceptible, the arms held down to the sides and the eyes demurely downcast. It is on this occasion that they wear the peculiar silver (and sometimes gold) crowns illustrated in the

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KRAIS GIRL IN DANCING DRESS

Reproduced from a picture by Miss Emma Smith of Cusco.

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place. The hair is worn tied in a knot behind the head, but with a long tail hanging down the back. Rich silk cloths are worn by the girls, who present the appearance of being, if anything, overdressed, or, as Yule aptly puts it, of "perfect pantaloonery." They wear a profusion of gold and coral head ornaments, silver and gold chains, bracelets, ear-rings of gold and any other jewellery they can lay hands on. Not only is the whole of the family jewellery requisitioned by the fair *dilettanti* (it is only the unmarried girls who dance), but she borrows from her friends. The men dance round the outside of the circle, waving *lyt-haps* and prancing (often nowadays wearing huge boots) with majestic strides. The music necessary for the dance consists of *tangmeet* (pipes), drums, and cymbals. This is *ka shad kyntiet*, or the dance of the women. Then there is *ka shad mantieh*, or the dance of the men, who are gaily dressed, wearing plumes of black and white cock's feathers (*u thiengkah*) and hold swords and shields. After greeting for some time, two men at a time rapidly approach one another and clash their swords together in mock combat. They then retire, and, after again revolving for a period, repeat the process; then other couples follow and take their place. This goes on until the dancers get tired or are told to stop.

The above description may be taken as applicable to all the Khasi dances. Dancing forms part of the ceremony of placing the ashes in the sepulchre of the clan. Dancing also forms a part of certain ceremonies performed at markets for the prosperity of the State and for the good of trade.

When I was at Mawsynram, at the time of the appointment of a Siem, I witnessed a very pretty dance called *ka shad kpamuit*, performed by men who held the leafy branches of trees in their hands. This is most effective. Then followed a dance of some forty young girls, very well dressed, covered with the usual gold and coral beads and silver chains, and wearing the silver crown, or *pansngiat*. The young women danced with great spirit, and with an absence of all shyness, but still with the greatest decorum. Many of the women, spectators as well as dancers, were observed to be without the usual *tap nuh likli*, or head-cloth, the absence of which is always a sign amongst the Khasi women of merry-making. There were

women from the War country, wearing their paternayns down, amongst whom was the wife of the Siem of Bokwai with her little daughter. The dance was a pretty sight, and I have seldom seen such evidence of unaffected happiness as was exhibited by the people on this occasion. Dancing may be described as one of the characteristic features of Khasi life.

The festival *Beh-dieng-khlam* festival takes place annually in June and elsewhere in the Jaintia Hills in the deep water moon month (= *Syllien*, or June). *Khlam* is the Khasi word for plague or pestilence, and *beh-dieng* signifies to drive away with sticks. The festival may be described as follows:—The males rise betimes on the day fixed and beat the roof with sticks, calling upon the plague-demon to leave the house. Having done this, later on in the day they go down to the stream where the goddess "Ailan" dwells. Then poles of great length, which have been newly cut, are held across the stream. The people jump on the poles and try to break them; when they succeed in doing so, a great shout is given. After all these poles have been broken, a very large pole is fixed across the stream. The people then divide themselves into two parties, and contend for the possession of the tree. The contest, however, is a good-humoured one, and although many buffets are given and received, these are not regarded seriously, and there are seldom any fights. Col. Bivar says the contending villagers, in their excitement, sometimes relapse into a state of almost complete nudity. The party which succeeds in obtaining possession of this post is supposed to gain health and prosperity during the coming year. Col. Bivar remarks that the origin of this so-called ceremony is said to be that the god of thunder, "*u-bri pyrthei*," and Ka Ailan, the goddess of the stream, opposed its performance. Many innovations, however, have crept in. People disguise themselves as giants and wild beasts, they also parade images of serpents, elephants, tigers, peacocks, &c. Dancing is carried on with enthusiasm by the males, the girls, clad in their best attire, remaining on-lookers. Before the meeting breaks up the males play a sort of game of hockey with wooden balls.

the earth as funeral to lingering kinghtal-auif

the chiefs of the family and the old family chiefs of the deceased from the tribal house?

If the guiness are continue it, then they gather the sacrificial gifts and the sacrificial money (which is often thousands of rupees) to use them for the festivities.

Two women then go to the various sacred and reverently fetch the bones that were placed there. One woman carries the bones of the male dead, the other the female ones, and both bring them to the house of the group author, where they are ceremonially placed and decorated with flowers and beautiful cloths. Now the spirits of the dead receive nourishment (ai bam), in that a pig, a rooster and a steer are sacrificed. The best pieces of these animals are kept in a basket in the house for a later division among the participants. The rest is sacrificed.

Then there is dancing. (35) This cere-

35. Cf. Table III, Picture 2: Ceremonial Dance in Honor of the Deceased.

monial dance in honor of the deceased lasts either three or five or nine days, whatever seems best (and how long the collected money lasts). A place in front of the house is festively arranged and used as the place for dancing (lyngpung). Music is played and liquor distributed.

On the day on which they intend to transfer the bones, the drums (ka khing) and the kettledrums (ka nakra) are beaten, [4]37 the flutes (ka sharati) are blown, guns (suloi) and cannons (ka san) are shot off. An ancestral

The men in the graves of the dead young girl, the old women the brida of the dead youth. They have the two scramble for the spirits' rice (ki synlakrieh ban ka ja snaiap) and have them jump over the rice mortar (khlong) and the rice pestle. Then straws are thrown as far as possible, which the two people are supposed to seize. This game of catching means the driving out of demons who surround the newly and wish to prevent the approach to the straws. Then one strews good rice (u bor rawai) on the road from the house to the end of the village. The two little people must now run with sticks (ka ki khongtah) and thresh or beat the rice. This happens three times, one after another.

Then it has become bright day, a handful of rice is taken from each of the relatives, as well as the contribution for defraying the [193] costs of the whole festivities. Then they fetch an "altar he-goat" (u' lang dawan), in order to cut off its head on the village altar (ka ka dawat ka shnong ka mulah). Now they make merry with drums and flags (ka keing ka lieng). The children and grandchildren sit down together and greet each other solemnly, [194] especially the "cousin" (u kha pka). Then a shield dance (nastieh) (38) is held. They

38. Cf. Table IV, Picture 1: Khasi men, ready for the shield dance.

perform three rounds. Then a he-goat is slaughtered, and all dancers with the shields bow three times before the "cousin" (u kha pka). Each of the sons of the group house (Stammhaus) does the same thing.

Now everybody rises, and someone sacrifices the scapegoat u' lang sait kauid. A

346 A
(Bur) weapon dance is performed to which the sons follow one behind the other (according to age) (39) (ahad wait, i.e. weapon dance).

39. Cf. Table IX, Picture 2: Weapon dance of the Ghost at the third burial.

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348 (Bur) When the weapon dance has ended, they go in a procession (as above for the new dying) to the new djet or new lyuti. Having arrived there, each of the sons slaughters a he-goat by separating the head of the animal from the body with one blow. The usual sacrifice takes place. But usually there are not a lot of he-goats slaughtered (since there is not enough money) but only one, which is then called a' long new lyuti. The retinue or escort of the sons ends here (hangre is cut as jingle-it on lyuti ni ahun sha).

The others continue on to the new hah. Having arrived there, they open the door (the closure of the container for the bones). A man, who is paid for it, crows three times to represent the spirit rooster lar lap. This occurs in front of the stone. Then all the spirits who are in the cave room are awakened (symbolic) by someone saying:

to shie to shie la wan u ahun la wan u kalawi — Stand up! Stand up! The children have come, the grandchildren have come!

Then they place the bones of the deceased inside, separated according to sex. In addition there are the sacrificial gifts: the bread and the cake, which they spread out (siang). Also morning and evening rice (i.e. cooked rice ready for eating) they place (theh —

2:Stegmiller-68 B-4,5(no date)1921 ARC Sheet ARC

Table III

Gathering the Remains and the Ashes Ceremonial Dance. Foot Stone and Head Stone.

2:Stagnitis-69 B-4,3(no date)1921 ART Sheet ART

Table IV

Ready for the Shield Dance.

Weapon Dance.

791 brought along and push the sacrificial gifts to
793 one side.

The new lyngdoh now gives the sign for the dance of joy. The men who are all in dancing clothes get up and seize the swords and dancing brushes they brought along. They place themselves one behind the other. The music begins and slowly the dancers move away from the place. Hopping and rocking from one leg to another, they move forward, forming a definite figure while doing it. Sometimes it is a circle, sometimes an eight, sometimes a spiral, which then slowly resolves itself. Now the dancers face each other in pairs. With loud cries each pair jumps at each other and they beat their swords together, uttering cries of joy which are seconded by the spectators. [Fig.]. Egg throwing: placing rice [a-

Now they arrange themselves as at the beginning and the dance begins again. Thus the dance crosses the place several times, each time the peculiar dance (shad mastiah) ending
793 with the striking together of the swords. The
792 new lyngdoh, who has now performed his first ceremonial sacrifice which is concluded by the sword dance, declares his veneration for the god who has commanded the sacrifice. For this purpose all the men arrange themselves in order and with the lyngdoh at the head bow three times before the (invisible) god. While they are all standing, the lyngdoh takes several steps backwards and standing repeats his bow. With this the ceremony is over.

They arrange themselves in the order they came in. Dancing they go down the mountain to the hut of the lyngdoh. As soon as possible a new sacrifice [all] is offered to the u 'lei lyngdoh, the god of sacrificers. With this the new lyngdoh has officially begun his new office

[* Use category 16, p 12 -- Analy-C]

kingdom, thou hast given the sun and the moon, for reckoning the year, so that we may have Puja once in the year, so that kings may arise, the children of the valleys may increase and thrive, the children of the Khasi, the children of the Khasi, the children of the War, so that the sacrificial gifts may increase before the face of thine altar." (11)

11. P. W. Schmidt, S.V.D., loc. cit., p. 902 (Authorgue).

At these state and community sacrifices, the official kyndohs are the chief one to appear, who together with the ruling king or chieftain and with other kyndohs from the villages perform the sacrifices. These annual state sacrifices are introduced and performed with great ceremony. They take place in front of the house of the s' iew sad (high priestess) of the state involved. (Fig. 2) [illegible] Fig. 6. The village chief in his sacrificial coat and ornaments.

In addition to the usual sacrificial gifts, which are grouped together on a small altar of earth and which consist of a banana leaf, betel nut leaves, pepper leaves, betel nuts, kyu and ryuai, fermented rice water in a gourd bottle, and oak leaves, there are chiefly hens and goats and at the end a pig. Goats are slaughtered in great numbers, so that the chief festival day of the state sacrifice is called pus blang (the goat heads) by the people.

Besides the slaughtering of the sacrificial animals, the dance plays a chief part. At these great sacrifices all the dances that are customary among the Khasi are performed: the dance [illegible] of the unmarried girls, the dance of the girls and men together, but both sexes are so placed that the men form an outer circle and the girls [illegible]

[illegible category #1, p. 13 -- Analyst]

172 on inner circle; the dance of the men with
• 59 horses; the sword dance of the men; the shield
796 dance of the men; the dance of the men in couples;
the solo dance of a girl and the solo dance of a
man.

All the inhabitants of the kingdom combine for the state sacrifice. With the cheerfulness peculiar to the Khasi they watch the passage of the individual sacrifices and the dances for hours at a time. In the evening of the day of the chief festival a sacrificial meal is held, in which all the sacrificers, dancers, and spectators may participate.

b) Private Sacrifices.

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In addition to the annual large state sacrifices, other sacrifices are also offered by the Khasi. These are the usual sacrifices which arise from the needs of daily life. The following can be mentioned as such:

1. The sacrifice for questioning spirits.
2. The sacrifice at the name giving.
3. The sacrifice before every important business, for example, before the market, before planting rice, before shooting arrows, before building a hut, before a journey, etc.
4. The sacrifice of thanks after recovering health.
5. The sacrifice in cases of sickness.
6. The sacrifice at the time of death.
7. Khein Kwaid (the sacrifice for finding out which spirits must be propitiated. This is a matter of finding out past errors of those already dead).
8. The sacrifice at a cremation.
9. The sacrifice at the burial of bones:

achieve calm aiming and a calm posture.

Another method of bending the bow is also used a great deal. The archer takes the arrow in his right hand, places it to the left on the bow and pulls the string with his middle finger and ring finger while his thumb and index finger hold the arrow. [illegible] (Table I, Khasi at an Archery Contest) [illegible] Table II. Khasi at an Archery Contest)

[illegible]

The Quiver

The quiver (ka ryngkap) is made of plaited bamboo which is covered on the outside with a very finely plaited cover of reed palm. Its shape resembles a elbow umbrella. At the opening the plaited work is raised in front in the shape of an arc, and in the back it is raised in a more rounded form. On each side where the quiver curves down and around a [illegible] is attached. Quivers are not used for shooting or hunting. The Khasi carry their arrows in their hands then. The use of quivers is restricted to funcies and even this is very rare. (25)

25. Ethnographic Museum, Munich, Quiver As. 106, is 57 centimeters long and 9 centimeters wide at the opening. The plaited part in front is 40 centimeters high behind 38 centimeters, and on the sides where it curves in 33.5 centimeters. The very finely plaited reed palm has 16 smooth inlays at distances of 1.3 to

and each are bought with these contributions. The balance, as with other money, is handed over to the S'iem sbā for management.

Until the approach of the actual festival, the fish sacrifice (mit-ō-kiñbaj) takes place on the day called jeu pomblah, on which all who appear are fed with dried fish and brandy. This is supposed to be a further announcement to the o Blei Shilliang, o Sundria lang Diem and ka Blei lang S'iem of the imminent Pain. Twelve different kinds of drums (beng) are beaten.

Then the drum, beng thad ryngkoh, is beaten three times, and the first sacrificial piece (beh Blei) and a flute player dance. The drum, ryngkoh, will be described in more detail below. After it is finished, the beng kynthei (women drums) have a turn, to the sound of which the S'iem and the flute player (duhalia) dance three times. Usually only women dance to this drum. About the method of dancing it is sufficient to remark that in a Khasi dance the dancing persons do not touch each other, and each carries out the motions independent of the others. After the women drums are beaten, then the sword dance drum (beng mastieh) and the large drum (nakra) are beaten. Torches are carried around and down of joy uttered nine times. Various drums, flute music, and clashes of cymbals follow, while dancing takes place. /Facing p. 696: (A) Fig. 2 Drums, flutes and cymbals of the Khasi. Fig. 3 Sacrificial knives and ka wait of the Khasi. Phot. P. From. Stegmiller S. D. S. Fig. 4. Sacrificial dress of the Seh Blei (Khasi). Phot. P. From. Stegmiller, S. D. S. / /Facing p. 696: (B) Fig. 10 (sic?). Khasi ornaments. Phot. P. Fro. Stegmiller, S. D. S. / /695/ At the end the S'iem dances alone, while the drums and flutes are not silent the whole night through. Fig. 2 shows several Khasi drums, a flute, and cymbals which are never missing from a dance.

The day of the large market, on which the actual ceremony begin, approaches meanwhile. On the day before -- ka sngi ammi -- the roads are swept and the place for the sacrifice of the goat put in order. As a sign of joy as to what will happen, drums are beaten again and flutes (tangmuri) played. In front of the house of the S'iem sbā, the S'iem and other men perform a sword dance. Although interesting, this dance is not very artistic. Hopping and skipping from one foot to the other, the men, one behind the other, move slowly in a circle on the open place. (cf. Fig. 6).[1] They hold a bunch of goat hair in one hand and a sword in the other. A shout of joy is uttered from time to time, then they stop again, jump at each other two by two, and hit each other with quick blows of their swords. Each one quickly draws back again and moves in a circle again as before. In this way the dance continues.

[1][For illustrations see category 16, pp. 14-18 --- Analyst]

The spectators now go to the side, the S'iem and the Duryphis come down to the place of sacrifice, while the Sub Siei receives the utensils and the sacrificial gifts and spreads them out in order on the ground. Then he takes the rooster in both hands and calls on the god Shillong with these words: "O god Shillong, thou who hast been existed since time immemorial! (he Siei Shillong hunths in sub a long drawl)". With a deep bow he then offers the sacrifice five times. Rooster and goat are sprinkled with water, rice, and the flour from eggs and rice, and are then beheaded. Then the examination of the entrails (Hyithor) takes place in order to see if the sacrifice was acceptable. The way of doing that will be given below.

After the end of the sacrifice the Sub Siei and a flute player lead the round dance. After them the S'iem and the other dancers follow in turn. Various drums are beaten alternately and flutes are played through the whole night. When night falls the guests of the S'iem and those of the various districts of the kingdom of Nongkrem are brought for the sacrifice of the next day.

The day following the great meyhen is called ka sngi Lyngba. It is the center point and climax of the whole ceremony. From early in the morning the crowds pour in from all sides of the Khasi Mountains. Early in the morning an unmarried girl of the royal lineage (ka S'iem ka-iang khynraw) dances in the house of the S'iem and before the ribbon Siei. Usually a granddaughter or nearer relative of the S'iem is chosen for this. Two men then take the girl in their arms and carry her with a rocking motion to the large open place in front of the ling sad.

Then the great folk dance begins. In the middle of the place the musicians squat on the ground and play the drums and flutes, and strike the cymbals. The music is quite without art, only a repetition of the same monotonous tune.

The women dancers move in a rather narrow circle around the musicians. Only the unmarried girls dance. The clothes they wear on it are very rich and frequently very valuable. Fine cloths, usually of red, yellow, or blue silk are draped over their bodies; the upper body and arms are covered by a satin jacket. Their hair is bound together in a bun behind their head; As string hangs /facing p. 896.

Fig. 5. Khasi Men Dancers in front of the ling sad. Phot. P. From. Bogmiller, S. D. S. Fig. 6. Sword Dance of the Khasi. Fig. 7. S'iem Sad and S'iem of Nongkrem. / /897// down from the bun which usually ends in three tassels. The head is covered by a golden or silver crown of fine chased work, which is topped by a bunch of feathers or a bunch of artificial flowers. Around their necks they wear chains of gold or

[For illustrations, see category 16, , p.6 --- Ansley]

silver and coconut in various sizes made of real corals. They are often so decorated with heavy earrings. Arms and necklaces are not worn. Around their arms and wrists are massive silver rings or bangs, the latter being quite wide and in the same shape as cuffs. Fig. 10 shows the ornaments in detail. The very grand women dancers usually have a servant carrying an opened umbrella behind them.

The Khasi dance does not have the exciting and lively motions that are characteristic of our dances. Each woman dancer with her arms hanging down at her sides and her eyes cast modestly to the ground could be considered a model of modesty. Each completes her motions alone and completely independent of the others. She continuously makes a circle around the musicians, moving sideways, forwards, or backwards. At the same time the feet are kept close together and are moved seemingly so little that the motion is scarcely visible. When a woman dancer is tired she withdraws in order to rest a bit, and then enters again into the rows of the other dancers.

Fig. 7 and 8 illustrate the above description of the Khasi women dancers. Fig. 8 shows the girls in the dance in front of the [illegible], of which only the lower part may be seen above in the picture on the right.

At a proper distance from the girls the men dance in a wider circle around the place. They also have special clothing. Over the usual white cloth that covers the lower part of the body they wear a skirt, and over it a silk coat embroidered with many colors without sleeves which ends in a long fringe. Cf. Fig. 9 for this. A veil or cloth of striped silk hangs down over the back. Costly coral chains decorate the breast. A bunch of artificial flowers (chalk) about 12 inches long or of black and white rooster feathers is placed in the left ear, while the right hand holds a bunch of goat hair. The dancers have red sockings which are now worn by many go very badly with the otherwise pretty costume.

The motions of the men are more lively than those of the dancing girls, but still quite reserved. In a dawdling manner they hop from one leg to another in a childish way, without lifting their legs very much. In this way they move forward, describing a circle; at the same time they wave the bunch of hair around in the air. From time to time they stop and at a group make a bow towards the middle of the circle with a loud resounding shout of pleasure, while they swing the bunch of hair downwards at the same time (cf. Fig. 8).

Then the dance continues for hours at a time amidst the noise of the music. Thousands of spectators who do not want to get tired dancing around the great place. In the afternoon, at about three o'clock /15h/ the dance, which plays a large part in all the religious festivities is ended.

Then preparations are made for the large sacrifice. In front of the house of the S'iem tăd several hearth are placed in a row beside each other, and in front of them at certain intervals twelve little heaps of leaves are made. Music now plays inside of the lĭng tăd. All the sacrificial gifts are given to the S'iem tăd in front of the eldest Bloi and then distributed to the sacrificers by her. Then they go out of the hut to the place of the sacrifice. There are twelve of them, namely the six official sacrificial priests of the kingdom and several kingdoms from the villages, the Soh Bloi is at their head, wearing a special sacrificial coat (cf. Fig. 6), while the others wear everyday clothes. Each one carries a dish in his hand with some rice, pounded flour for kpu and ryoni, betel nuts and the pepper leaf that belongs with them, a small young hen, a water container, leaves of the Khoi wah tree, as well as a small gourd bottle with rice liquor. The dish and the water container of the sacrificial priests are of enamelled iron, those of the Soh Bloi of silver -- all clean and polished until gleaming.

The spectators are arranged to the right and the left of the sacrificers, so that there is a wide alleyway open through the middle of the place to the gate of the inner fence which surrounds the place and the lĭng tăd. Several men are constantly busy keeping the crowd within these bounds. No one may come in through the gate during the whole ceremony, because the god comes here during the sacrifice - therefore the broad path must be left open. If anyone should chance to wish to come in through the gate during the performance of the sacrifice, he is driven back with loud shouts. If he dared to come in anyway, in earlier times he would have been a child of death; now the fear of the English government might protect him to a certain extent, although this could hardly be an absolute guaranty of his life because of the religious excitement of the people.

The twelve now squat down on the hearth placed in front of the lĭng tăd, the Soh Bloi in the middle. Behind them the S'iem tăd sits alone on the steps which lead from the lĭng tăd to the place of the sacrifice. Somewhat further back sits the S'iem surrounded by his Mentris and relatives (cf. Fig 7).[1] The Soh Bloi sets the example in all that follows; the others watch him and copy him. While each of the sacrificers slaughters only a small hen or a goat, the Soh Bloi has

[1] [for illustrations, see category 116, pp 14-18 --- Analyst]

Fig. 5.

Fig. 6.

Fig. 7

G. Becker-46 M-4,5 (no date) 1969 ARTstor Slide ART

G. Becker 17 M-4,5 (no date) 1909 / AR7 Khasi AR7

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Phot. P. Frese, Hagenbeck, M. B. H.

Phot. P. Frese, Hagenbeck, M. B. H.

Fig 1. Khasi-Mädchentanz vor der *ring nid*

Fig. 2

7 Pocket--2b M-4,5 (1910-11) 1924 ART Khasi ART

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Fig. 3. At the Oracle of Egg Throwing.

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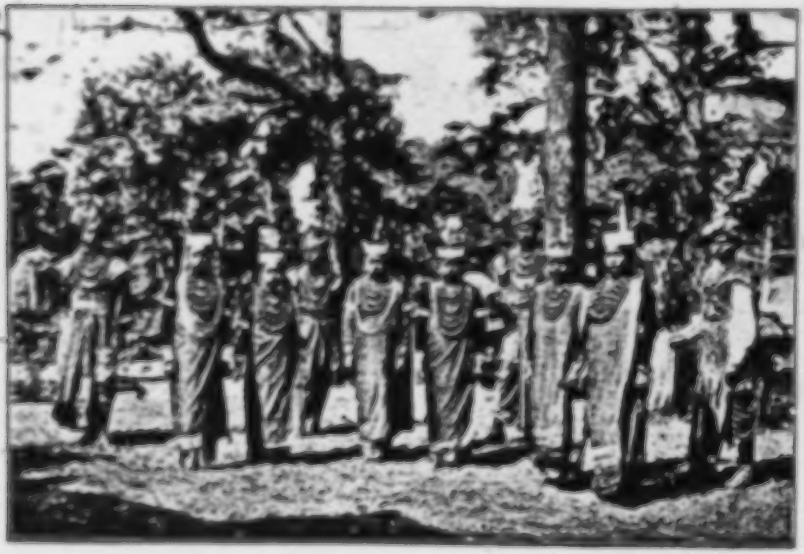

Fig. 5 Khasi Girls and Men in Festive Dance Clothing.

17: Banerjee E-5 (1955) 1962 AR7 Khasi AR7
Smit

796 The goats were sacrificed by his sister's eldest son (*Siem-khynnah*) and in
182 charge of respective units at the open courtyard. The priests evoked the
ancestors and ancestress and called upon them by name praying 'Oh God and
769 Goddess, I offer this sacrifice as our ancestors did. Bless the *Siem*, his family
and the people of his state. I shall beseech you again on this day after one
231 year. You create favourable weather by virtue of your power, bring clouds and rains to yield bumper crops and ensure a happy and prosperous life.'

On the last day (Nongkrem), a man of Mawroh clan sacrificed a pig introducing an iron spike in its left armpit. Nine pieces of meat from different parts of the pig's body were again offered to their five ancestors. The *Siem* in the presence of his *Durbar* performed the last item of festival by praying to U Shillong, when the Chief of Rynjah clan also followed in the same way for seeking the blessings of their Chief deity.

This brought the ritual to an end performed at the residence of *Siem*. The five pieces of goat's and pig's meat offered to their five ancestors, were then handed over to the in-charge of the five units considered as somewhat higher in their State organisation. They distributed them at a suitable place in their unit, making a feast as a sort of public declaration of the completion of their greatest festival for the year.

DANCING

535 Besides the ritual described above, dance with the accompaniment of music
T96 formed an important aspect of this festival. A dance known as *sad-tyngkoh*
[533] had been a regular feature for the first, second, third and fifth day. This dance has some interesting features. It has to be performed in pairs. The first pair was constituted by Chief priest and the Chief musician. Second to fifth pairs were between the Sardars of the eight units after which *Siem* along with an otucial of his council constituted the sixth pair. The subsequent pairs were formed by any two persons from the gathering. They danced only after bowing first before the Oak pillar (Rishot), then to *Siem* on the fifth day. This pairing was then not adhered to on completion of the last rite of the festival.

A second type of dance (*Ka sad mastieh*) was then performed in the courtyard by the musicians as well as by the professional dancers (nong-shad) with sword and fly-brush in the afternoon of the third day. The dance was always held in pairs first by musicians, and then dancers, who donned their traditional dress consisting of silk turban (Jainspong) decorated with feathers, coloured sleeveless coat (Jymphong) silver chains and coral necklaces. Later on they joined the procession, that went to the adjacent hill where after the completion of the ceremony of goat killing, a group dance was performed returning to the residence of *Siem* ultimately.

[291] This dance (*sad-nohkjat*) was performed by the Siems family. It was held
[301] early in the morning of the fourth day in the central hall (Shlur) and also in the courtyard. The men put on their normal dress whereas the women dressed themselves with gold and silver crown (pansngiat), numerous silver ornaments and different coloured blouse. They dressed and braided the hairs into a knot just at the nape. The High Priestess who also danced with [302] the membes of the Siems' family, stood in the middle of the line and chief musician stood at one end. They hold each other in hand and danced round the fire-place of the central hall (Shlur) in anti-clock-wise direction in accompaniment of music. The people assembled there, gave vent to their feeling in their customary way every time, before they resumed to make it three times. Similar performance of dances were also held in the courtyard.

17: Banerjee E-5 (1955) 1962 AR7 Khasi AR7
Smit

Then followed the dance of the girls (*Ki shad kynthei*) who were also wearing dress as described above. They kept their eyes down, keeping their arms on their sides taking such a short steps with the music, that the movement of the feet were hardly perceptable. The boys were also in their dancing dress as worn by *nongshad* and danced with fly-brush round the girls making their steps with the beatings of the drums. The music started from the morning would be stopped only after completion of the dance which prolonged till evening. These functions served as a good source of amusement to the people, enabling them to have a good diversion from their monotonous life with an opportunity to meet their friends and relations who assembled there from different parts of the hill.

535 • [534]

DISCUSSION

From the fore-going description, it is evident that the Khasi live in a democratic set up in which the secular duties are entrusted to the *Siem*. A different rule is followed in the case of religious festivals. Every Khasi family entrusts the sacredotal work of the house to the youngest daughter. The *Siem's* sister (Siem Sad) being the nearest member of his mother's clan, is made responsible for the observance of those ceremonies which concerns the welfare of the subjects. The people attend the festival to seek blessings of their supreme deity U Shillong and their presence in the *Siem's* residence indicates their loyalty to him. The rituals of the festival, instead of being performed by her (High Priestess), were conducted by the Chief Priest (Soh blei) for which he was allotted a very imporatnt position in the celebration. The musicians were given similar status owing to the belief in the sacredness of their music. It ought to be played in proper tunes otherwise the displeasure of the deity would fall on them on finding any slight departure in this respect. For this reason, the music is considered as important as the rituals and the role of musicians were consequently given due recognition at every stage of the festival. The tradition of deputing one person of Nengnong clan to sacrifice the goat at the top of the hill was followed on account of their ancestors having carried out in olden times the profession of side-de-camp (body guard) to the *Siem*. Another person of kharhamen clan was also asked to carry the head of the sacrificial animal from the hill to the residence of the *Siem* after the worship, as his predecessors were sent in ancient times during the period of their captivity in this State. Such incidents were found expressed in a symbolic way through their ceremonies.

182 64 796 [593] [782]

The most important concern of the people was to maintain their mode of living together with their property and other means of subsistence. They worshipped him so that he might prevent the evil spirits from doing any harm and may in addition grant them bumper crops. To be recipient of such a favour, they appeased their god U Shillong with gifts and sacrifices. It is not sure whether he is considered as one of their deified ancestors but his important position in the Khasi pantheon enabled him to have some priority in their worship. The offering of red-cock together with a yellow goat, moreover, revealed his amiable and benevolent nature as the malignant ones get representation invariably with black colours. U Shillong was invoked simultaneously with other dead ancestors, with this hope, that all the deities would pool their supernatural strength in fighting the evil spirits before the latter were able to cause any harm to their crops or to reduce in any way the fertility of their fields.

796 769 782 776 182

It would be interesting to refer here about the presentation of nine pieces of meat from various parts of the sacrificial animal. It may be a case of appeasement by serving him with some food but there seems to be something

17: Banerjee E-5 (1955) 1962 AR7 Khasi AR7
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796 magical in such gifts. The khasi deities being souls of departed members,
782 are anthropomorphic in nature, have all the qualities of an ordinary human
769 being. The worshippers believe that the deities may also loose their strength
776 in course of time which can be augmented only by offering suitable sacrifices.
182 They presented pieces of meat to transfer in them the supernatural 'power' which are concentrated or lodged in those regions of the sacrificial animal, from where they were taken out. It is a case of reciprocal help between the deity and the devotee so that on attaining their normal strength, they would fulfil their request.

796 The Khasi people while participating in the celebration gave vent to their
769 emotion through their traditional cries. It could not be definitely established
182 whether these were any indication of frightening the evil spirits but on the other hand, those were intended to cheer the *Siem*, musicians, and the respective units taking parts in the celebration. The musicians on another occassion, went round the altar three times on reaching the top of the hill. The
[644] members of the *Siem's* house similarly performed a sacred dance round the
[801] fire place of central hall (Shlur) to the same number of times. This odd number of three seemed to be an auspicious one. The exact cause for such a reverential attitude to this figure may be to pay respect to their primal ancestress (Ka Iawbei), her husband (U Thawlang) and her brother, *i.e.*, first maternal uncle (U Suidnia) who are considered highest amongst all the Khasi deities.

796 The dancing is generally taken as secular part of religious function, but the
• 535 Khasi people considered them (except the last one) as sacred for the reason
182 that it is one of their methods of propitiating their deity. The people at times, ascribe certain meanings to them to rationalise their thinking. The dancing invariably put the participants into ecstasy to enable them to be in communion with their supernatural beings, yet those are interpreted as a device to control the spirits inspite of its calm and quiet nature. The people even then enjoyed them with this hope that these would prevent the intruding spirits from spreading diseases. Owing to the fixation of the dates of the function at the time of sowing period, the dance of the unmarried girls may have some bearing on the promotion of fertility of the soil. The custom of allowing Khasi boys to dance round the spinsters with fly-flap in one of their hands may be to protect them from the influence of the evil spirits.

The heads of the various units adhered to the official precedence strictly before they allowed a common man to take part in the dancing. The custom of allowing two officials to dance, at a time, was in recognition to their equal status. It had become a practice to follow at every stage of their function. The presence of all the in-charge of this Siemship were essential to secure the blessings of their deity on behalf of his subjects whom they represent in official capacity in this festival. This is a suitable mechanism to foster unity and solidarity among the people of the different units which is the main aim of this celebration. This was found to be so when Khasi people from all parts of State were seem witnessing the dancing of the unmarried girls. The informant on being asked to state the reason of permitting the spinsters only in this dance, came out with an interesting fact about the ancient Khasi tradition. The dance used to offer at one time, an opportunity to the youngmen of the Royal families in selecting their brides. A betel leaf with a nut were usually thrown at a girl and the men going round them, remained as witness of this incident. This explanation received some support from the frequent utterances (*rong-rong*) by the public, expressing a desire to run away with a girl dancing with graceful style.

796 The celebration can be taken up as a solidarity rite. The performance is
182 all the more essential for the purpose of security without which the people

20: Hunter G-4 (no date) 1897 AR7 Khasi AR7

burning the dead in the immediate neighbourhood of the village of Jowái. Suspicions of insurrection arose during the months of October and November 1861. In the beginning of January 1862 alarming reports were received from various quarters, and the first serious outbreak occurred on the 17th of that month. This was occasioned by the interference of a *dárogá*, or native police official, with a religious ceremony that took place at the village of Jaiong. In such ceremonies dancing with arms is held essential; and the *dárogá* took upon himself to disarm the dancers. This was the signal for a general rising. The *thánd* or police station at Jowái was burned to the ground; the garrison of sepoys was besieged, and all show of British authority was swept away throughout the Hills. The Syntengs fought bravely for their independence, and at first were successful in cutting off several small detachments of police and sepoys. Their weapons were bows and arrows. In common with the other hill tribes of the North-East Frontier, their chief defence consisted in a series of strong stockades, one behind another; and the paths leading to their villages were thickly planted with *pánjis*, or little bamboo spikes, stuck in the ground like caltrops. The battalion of sepoys stationed in the Hills was rendered inefficient by sickness. At last it was found necessary to move a regular army, including an elephant battery and two regiments of Sikhs, into the country in order to quell the revolt. Colonel Dunsford was in chief command. He was accompanied by Major Haughton, the Governor-General's Agent on the North-East Frontier, and Captain Morton, the Deputy-Commissioner of the Khási and Jáintiá Hills, who acted in a political capacity. The operations were tedious and harassing. The rebel chiefs were captured one by one, and the District was declared to be finally pacified in March 1863, after the rebellion had lasted for fifteen months. The special Commission appointed under Act xi. of 1857, for the trial of offenders in the Jáintiá Hills, was dissolved in December 1863. The causes of the rebellion were thus summed up by Major Haughton in an official despatch to the Government of Bengal:—

'Taxation was introduced without the supervision with which such a measure should have been accompanied. It was followed up by fresh taxation and rumours of other taxes, also by fiscal and other innovations, which tended to disturb the minds of the people, without any counterpoise such as might have resulted from the continued presence of a European officer.' The Syntengs, like the